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E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/11/2019
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SUBJECT: NORWAY AGREES WITH USG APPROACH ON SRI LANKA IDP
ISSUE

REF: STATE 92641

Classified By: Political/Economic Counselor Cherrie S. Daniels
for reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Norway's response to reftel demarche was uniformly positive. Poloff met with Tone Allers, Sri Lanka Desk officer at the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). Allers, after having two days to digest the information in the demarche and share it with the Norwegian embassy in Colombo, stated, "We agree with absolutely everything in it and we think it's positive that you're approaching it this way." She said that our talking points, as well as our demarche to the Government of Sri Lanka (GSL), address the same issues Norway and other donors are discussing with the GSL in Colombo.

¶2. (C) Allers continued by saying that Western countries agree that there is a need to coordinate better, and to put pressure on the GSL to speed the reintegration of refugees, increase freedom of movement, and open up the use of host families. Allers responded positively to our suggestions of a new visit by Vijay Nambiar and a follow up trip by Walter Kalin. She especially pointed to Kalin's emphasis to the GSL on individual, rather than group treatment of refugees, which she said was a very positive message he conveyed during his last visit.

¶3. (C) Allers concluded by stating that Norway would be most interested in hearing more from the USG on the "contact group" idea. She said that the co-chairs meeting for September had been canceled, and it appeared that group was now in limbo. She clarified that the issue was not a preference to resurrect the co-chairs group per se, but just to understand better what we were considering for a new "contact group."

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